

MAULES CREEK COAL PROJECT FACT SHEET

ECOLOGY

KEY POINTS

- The Maules Creek Coal Project falls within the Leard State Forest – an area that has predominantly been used for forestry and mining activities. Under the *Brigalow and Nandewar Community Conservation Area Act 2005* (BNC Act), State Forest land within the Project Boundary is zoned for forestry and mining purposes.
- The Maules Creek Coal Project is not located on or in the close vicinity to the prime agricultural land of the Liverpool Plains.
- Leading ecological specialists Cumberland Ecology Pty Ltd (Cumberland) prepared an Ecological Impact Assessment for the Maules Creek Coal Project in accordance with all relevant policies and guidelines.
- The Maules Creek Coal Project will affect approximately 544 hectares (ha) of native vegetation (458 ha of Box Gum Woodland and 86 ha of Derived Native Grassland) conforming to the community listed as an Endangered Ecological Community (EEC) under the *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995* (TSC Act) and a Critically Endangered Ecological Community (CEEC) under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act).
- There is currently at least 405,000 ha of the listed Box Gum Woodland community remaining in Australia, of which more than half occurs in NSW. The Maules Creek Coal Project proposes the disturbance of only 0.27% of the community remaining in NSW.
- Whitehaven has developed a comprehensive Biodiversity Offset Strategy to compensate for the impacts to native flora and fauna.

- Whitehaven has taken all reasonable and feasible steps to develop the approved Mine Plan to avoid, mitigate or offset impacts identified in the assessment.
- Whitehaven amended the initial Mine Plan for the Maules Creek Coal Project to avoid the disturbance of over 100 hectares (ha) of vegetation community listed as EEC under the TSC Act and Critically CEEC under the EPBC Act.
- Further to this, the Project Approval (PA10_0138) and the EPBC Act Controlled Action Approval for the Maules Creek Coal Project require a buffer of 250 m to be retained to the north of the common Mining Lease Boundary with Boggabri Coal.
- No Threatened flora species have been identified within the Project Boundary to date.





WHITEHAVEN COAL

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- The Maules Creek Coal Project is approved to disturb approximately 2,180 ha of land:
 - Approximately 1,665 ha of disturbance will impact on forest and woodland vegetation;
 - Approximately 415 ha of disturbance will impact on grassland vegetation; and
 - Approximately 100 ha of the Project disturbance will impact on exotic grasslands and other vegetation.
- The Project will affect approximately 544 ha of native vegetation (458 ha of Box Gum Woodland and 86 ha of Derived Native Grassland) conforming to the community listed as an EEC under the TSC Act and a CEEC under the EPBC Act.
- There is currently at least 405,000 ha of the listed Box Gum Woodland community remaining in Australia, of which more than half occurs in NSW. The Maules Creek Coal Project proposes the disturbance of only 0.27% of the remaining community in NSW.
- The Maules Creek Coal Project is proposing to disturb less than 60% of the Box Gum Woodland known to occur within the Project Boundary.
- The land disturbance for the Maules Creek Coal Project is likely to significantly impact potential habitat for a number of listed Threatened fauna species.
- The Threatened species that have the potential to occur within the Project Boundary are mainly highly mobile species of birds and bats, the potential impact on mobile species will not be as significant due to their ability to relocate within the region.
- No groundwater dependent ecosystems are predicted to be adversely affected by the Project.